

SECRET

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

20 September 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: WE/BC/C

ATTENTION

: ☐

☐

SUBJECT : Possible Candidate for Repatriation
from Canada

1. The attached might be of some interest to your ☐ The author obviously is not worthy of any poetic license but, if his letter and poem are to be taken at face value, somebody in Canada might like to buy him a one-way ticket to that Eden about which he writes. On the other hand, there was an interesting comment about the poem made by the director of a cultural exchange group from the Soviet Union visiting in the West earlier this summer. The Soviet told our source that he had an interesting incident to tell about. He said that one Petro SOBKIV from Toronto sent a poem to Radyanska Ukraine asking that it be published. Several weeks after the poem appeared in the newspaper it was noticed by Soviet Ukrainians that if one read the poem from top to bottom taking the first letter of each line, with two extra letters added, the poem reads "sharpen your knives, both here and there, to fight the Moscovites, Lachs (Poles) and Judas." The Soviet thought the whole thing was very amusing. He told the source that the poem was very poor from the literary point of view and that the irony of it all was that the poem and accompanying letter were printed under the heading, "A letter from a distant friend." The original text is attached.

2. There is no information in our files on the Subject. A source of this office states that SOBKIV is an old emigre who for some time sympathized with the Ukrainian Progressives in Canada, but that he seems to be somewhat in the middle between the nationalists and the Progressives at this time.

3. Please address any inquiries concerning this memorandum to ☐ ☐ on extension 7168.

☐ Chief, SR/CA ☐

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downgrading and
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A THOUGHT OF A CANADIAN UKRAINIAN

There is no nightingale in Canada,
Even the cuckoo doesn't coo -
The years pass, and my heart
Breaks from pain.

There is freedom only on paper.
The purse here - is God and czar,
Hungry sharks - millionnaires
Treat people like market wares.

You are never absent from mind,
Ukraine, our Eden on earth, -
I love you and all the people
Who joined the strong union.

Respect, glory and greetings,
Great praise to him
In Korea, Africa, in Havanna
And there where the old world falls.

Youth perpetual and sunny from the East
Paves the road into the future,
Carried planets to all nations,
Inspired new life...
O time impetuous, cosmos-winged!
No one will stop you -
We will force the atom, nuclear physics
To serve peace.

And on this new earth
There will be no "we" and "thou"
In bliss and joy in freedom
We will all be - brothers!

Petro Sobkiv
Toronto, Canada
1965

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The following is a translation of an article which appeared on page 4 in issue No. 60, 14 March 1965, of the Soviet Ukrainian newspaper Radyanska Ukraina.

A LETTER FROM BEYOND THE OCEAN
A WORD FROM A FAR AWAY FRIEND

A letter arrived in our editorial offices:

"From distant Canada where there live several hundred thousand Ukrainians who remember their great Fatherland, I am sending you my first poem which, if it warrants publication, I request you publish in your newspaper."

The author of this letter -- Petro SOBKIV, who lives in the far away city of Toronto, writes further that certain people beyond the ocean plainly inferred that his "poem would not be published by a Soviet newspaper because the word 'Ukraine' is mentioned in it. However, Mr. SOBKIV writes, "these people are 100 years behind times. I shall not be offended if you do not publish my poem because of literary imperfections, but I will be thankful if you will send me your opinion of this poem. I shall also be grateful if you send me the issue of the newspaper in which my poem will appear, if you decide to publish it."

It is difficult to say that Petro SOBKIV's poem is entirely perfect from the standpoint of literary artistry but it contains another -- not lesser -- civic value.

An abominable mass of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists, which has encamped beyond the ocean would prefer to like to lead those who live far away from their native country to believe that they are separated not only by the ocean but also by disagreements and hatreds, lack of faith and lack of acceptance. This is far from the truth. Everyone well knows that the greater percentage of Ukrainians beyond the ocean, in their thoughts and in their hearts -- sometimes with grief and sometimes with expectation -- carry before them a picture (obraz) of the land dear to their hearts, that they in their thoughts and hopes watch the growth and achievements of Soviet Ukraine and unceasingly continue to remain our sincere well wishers and friends and no lies will conquer the strength of these feelings.

The letter and poem of Petro SOBKIV -- this persuasive and moving document which we publish below -- is witness to this.

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